

# THE SOCIAL PIRATES

The Newest Kalem Picture Now Being Presented at the Leading Motion Picture Theatres in Greater New York

Plot by George Bronson Howard  
Novelization by Hugh C. Weir

## Story No. 1.

### THE LITTLE MONTE CARLO

Two American girls, Mona Hartley and Mary Burnett, set about punishing the "Wolves of Society" through their check books. This is the story of their first adventure.

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"I'm glad to get back, at that," said Mona Hartley to her chum, Mary Burnett.

The two girls were leaning over the rail of a steamer that was being warped into her dock by tugs. They had been having a vacation trip, and, though that was over now, and they faced the necessity of replenishing the store of money, heavily drawn upon for the trip, they looked happy.

"So'm I," said Mary. "I was tired when we went away."

Mona laughed. These two girls, so well dressed, so fashionable in their appearance, had no visible means of support.

They had become embittered some time before by the experience of some close friends who had suffered at the hands of unscrupulous leeches of society, blackmailers and parasites.

They had therefore decided to conduct a campaign against this class of men and make them suffer, especially financially, in what the two girls considered a partial retribution for their misdeeds.

They had pledged themselves to select for their victims only those whose despicable and contemptible actions had already marked them as belonging to the pack of black wolves of society, and in this way the two girls considered that they merely collected the bill of expense due them for conducting this crusade against such individuals, and the wiles to which they were obliged at times to resort were simply a minor detail in this process of collection.

A few minutes later they were ashore. For some reason they did not secure one of the first flight of taxis and had to wait while another was summoned. And while they waited they strolled to the end of the pier, to look at the passing river traffic. Suddenly Mary clutched Mona's arm.

"Look at that girl, Mona!" she said. "What do you suppose is the matter with her? I'll swear she is trying to pluck up courage to jump in!"

Mona looked and saw a young girl who was so distraught that she was not aware that any one was watching her. With a quick leap Mona sprang toward her and was just in time to seize her as the girl gathered up her determination and stepped out to drop into the water. Mary was not a moment behind her chum, and together they held her.

"Look here," said Mona, as the girl struggled to free herself. "There's no sense in that! There's no sense in that! There's nothing so bad that it can't be mended!"

In a moment the girl stopped struggling and stared dully at them.

"You don't know," she said. "There's nothing else for me. I've made up my mind—and now Heaven knows if I'll get up my courage again!"

"Perhaps you won't need to," said Mary. "Come on Mona—bring her along. I see a cab waiting for us."

The girl went with them unresistingly, dully. In a few minutes they reached the furnished apartment they had taken before they left the city, and in a few minutes more they had the girl's story and her name—Stella.

"You poor kid!" said Mona sympathetically. "In the chorus, were you? And some one introduced you to this Charles Holbrook? He said he'd marry her as soon as he could fix things up with her father? And you were foolish enough to believe him?"

It was a pathetic little story, conventional enough. Stella had been innocent—ignorant, in reality. She had believed Holbrook's promises. And then—the awakening. He had tired of her—a curt note had come one day in the mail, telling her that things had developed so that he could not see her again, and she had better make some arrangement for herself. Her desperate appeals to him had

gone unanswered. And now that the mischief was done, there were plenty to warn Stella.

"Why you silly child—I believe you're in love with him still!" said Mary.

"Oh, I am—if he'd only marry me!" wailed Stella.

Mona and Mary exchanged pitiful glances. And suddenly it seemed that Mona had an idea.

"You say he's rich, Stella?" she asked.

"Ever and ever so rich!" said Stella.

"Well—don't despair yet," said Mona. "There may be a way to help you. For now you've got to take some money, and remember that we're your friends and are going to stand by you. You'll promise not to do anything silly—as you were going to when we saw you?"

"I'll promise," said Stella, tearfully. "You're awfully good to me!"

"Look here," said Mary, sharply. "After Stella had gone. 'We can't do a thing for that poor kid, and you know it! Why did you go and raise her hopes that way?'"

"Well—because she had to be cheered up," said Mona. "And I'm not so certain we can't do anything for her anyhow. I don't know yet, but I've got a sort of a plan. Look here!"

She lifted her skirts to her knees and executed a little dance.

"Do you think I could get a job in the chorus?" she asked.

"Anywhere!" said Mary. "But why?"

"I think I want to meet Mr. Charley Holbrook—on his own ground!" said Mona, viciously. "I think luck's com-



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on, and she made her way to the stage, where applicants for places in the chorus of the new show were being examined. A man sat at a table with a book before him.

"Look all right in short skirts!" he asked.

Mona proved to him that she would. He entered her name and address—she gave false ones, naturally. Then her voice was tried, and in five minutes she was engaged and instructed to report for rehearsal next morning.

"And God help those who aren't quick," the producer told them. "We've got to put this show on in

front row position—she was, indeed, one of a group that was made particularly prominent in some of the big concerted numbers. This served her purpose very well, and it was certain that she was conspicuous enough to attract Holbrook's attention. She had made Stella show her a photograph of him, and so was able to recognize him, sitting in a stage box on the opening night. She made eyes at him deliberately once or twice, and had the satisfaction of knowing that he had attracted her attention.

He let her alone the first night. But on the second evening he came behind the scenes between the acts—the management being glad to extend that privilege to certain rich men—and was introduced to her. And later he was waiting for her when she emerged from the stage door.

"Hello, bright eyes!" he said. "How about a bite to eat?"

"Oh, no, thanks!" she said. "But—if you'd like to walk home with me—I'm rather nervous in the street at night."

He laughed delightedly, and fell into step beside her. Here was something new, he thought—a real chorus girl who wasn't hungry all the time.

"I live here," said Mona. "Thanks for seeing me home!"

"Can't I come in?"

"Oh, no," she said, pretending to be shocked. "Not to-night!"

He hurried in. He did not know that she only waited in the vestibule until he was out of sight.

For several nights Mona let Holbrook walk "home" with her, but she declined all his invitations, and she would never yield to his requests to permit him to enter the house which she had made her home.

As she had been certain would be the case, the difficulty he was experiencing proved simply an added attraction. When he found that she would not drop into his hands like a ripe apple he redoubled his efforts to win her.

He's getting very enthusiastic, thought Mona. "How about your plan? Have you really got one?"

"I certainly have!" said Mary. "Look here, I've been making a few little purchases."

And she took Mona into their spare room where several packing boxes had been placed. Mona cried out in enthusiastic approval at what they revealed. A furniture wheel, all the other paraphernalia of gambling.

"We can turn this apartment into a perfect model of a gambling house at our hour's notice," said Mary. "I think that's going to be the proper way to hook your little friend."

"Well—he's awfully careful—he doesn't care for gambling himself," said Mona. "He's told me so."

"You like it, though, don't you?"

"Ah—I see! Yes—I'm crazy about it. Mary—I believe you're a genius!"

"Don't be too sure—there's a wise proverb about not counting your chickens before they're hatched, my dear! I haven't worked out the details at all yet—I thought we'd better act in a case like this, on the spur of the moment."

"I think so, too. Well—there are a few things we can decide. Suppose you turn up at Curate's on New Year's Eve! I think he may persuade me to have supper there with him that night."

And, to his delight, Mona did yield to Holbrook's pleading to that extent. She had foreseen that he would make a special point of it on that night, the great occasion of the whole year for those who flock like moths about the white lights of the theatrical district.

"Well—just for this once!" she conceded at last.

"You're a queer kid!" he said. "Sometimes I think you're wise—and then again I'm not sure I'm not all wrong about you!"

"I'm wise enough, Charley boy," she told him meaningfully. "Maybe I ought to wait a lot more than I've got, but I seem to get along."

"Well, I'm thankful for small favors," he said. "So the beginning of the riotous celebration found them at a table in Curate's. And it was not long before Mary, stunningly dressed, passed their table."

"Hello, Betty!" she said, using Mona's assumed name. "I haven't seen you in an age!"

"My friend, Mr. Holbrook, Miss Dean," said Mona. "Aren't going, are you?"

"This is getting slow," said Mary. "I'm off for some real fun! Little Monte Carlo for mine!"

A spasm of envy distorted Mona's features.

"I wish I could go, too!" she said. "Geel! I don't know how long it is since I had money enough to watch the little ball rolling with some of my money backing it!"

"Come on—be a sport," said Mary. "Bring your friend along."

"No use—I can't afford it," said Mona.

"Sure you can," said Holbrook. "I'll stake you!"

"That's the way to talk!" said Mary. "There you are, Betty. You've got a live one in tow to-night!"

Holbrook hung eagerly on her arm and was sure that now, by a lucky chance, he had come upon Mona's weakness.

"Well—I don't know," said Mona, doubtfully, but making it seem that she was greatly tempted.

"Well, be along," said Holbrook. "You look for us in about an hour, and I'll guarantee to persuade her."

"All right—I'll leave her to you," said Mary.

And at last, though reluctantly, Mona consented to the plan.

"I'll go and look up," she said. "But I'm not going to let you stake me! I won't be under obligations to you or any other man!"

"Oh, don't talk foolishness!" said Holbrook. "I'd be tickled to death to give you a chance to have some fun. You know I'm willing to do anything I can for you at any time you give me word."

When the hour was up she led him to the apartment she shared with Mary—which he had transformed into "Little Monte Carlo."

Mona herself scarcely knew the apartment. So skillfully had it been transformed into the semblance of one of the cozy and luxurious gambling dens that cater to the patronage of rich and fashionable people, and especially women, that it amazed her. A suave and smiling man came forward to welcome them, and pretended that he knew Mona well, though she had never before met him before. He was the proprietor, Mona had to admire Mary's cleverness. Besides the proprietor there were several other superior waiters, two or three croupiers and dealers, and a number of players, well dressed people, who paid no attention to the newcomers.

"A wonderful place to see you, Betty," said Mary, coming up to them. "But I was sure you'd persuade her, Mr. Holbrook!"

"He didn't—altogether. I'm not going to play," said Mona.

However, it was easier to say that she wouldn't play than to stick to the resolution, good as it was. The sight of the rolling ball, the disappointment of seeing it roll into a number she would have played—it was all too much for Mona! In a few minutes she drew out her purse and risked, once by one, the few quarters that it held. She lost regularly, and at last she turned a disappointed face up to Holbrook.

"There—I've lost all I had!" she said. "Now I'm going home!"

"Don't be silly," he said. He squeezed her hand, and left a couple of bills in it. "Take that and beg off! You've got enough to pay me back!"

Mona still had scruples, but suddenly she cast them away. And now the gambling fever seemed to seize upon her. She played recklessly, losing more and more of Holbrook's money, until all he had in his pockets was used up.

"I have I got to stop now!" she demanded. "Mona, angrily. 'Oh—one

hasn't any business playing roulette without plenty of money. If I could play a few minutes more I'd win it all back, I know!"

"Let her have some chips—I'll make good," said Holbrook to the proprietor. "Here's my card. I guess you know the name."

"Yes, sir—of course," said the man, as he took the card. He hesitated, and then he said: "But it's a rule of the house—we can't do anything on the verbal agreement. If you'd sign an I. O. U. now—"

"Oh, do!" begged Mona, all her scruples supposedly gone.

At the sight of her flushed cheeks Holbrook forgot discretion. He took her, the proprietor had offered him and scribbled an I. O. U. for five hundred dollars.

"I wouldn't let her have as much as that, Mr. Holbrook," the man said, in a low voice. "Just make it, I. O. U. Betty Brown's losses. Then we'll see that it doesn't go beyond a reasonable sum. D'you see?"

"Yes—I guess that would be better," said Holbrook. And he changed the form of the slip in accordance with the man's suggestions. Not long afterward Mona pushed back her chair and got up.

"No use," she said. "I must have lost a couple of hundred more! This is my unlucky night—and I've got a headache, besides! I'm going home. Take me home, Charley!"

He was willing enough to comply. And at the boarding house he was sure that now she would let him come in with her. But she pleaded politely.

"Oh, no to-night, Charley!" she begged. "You've no idea how wretched I feel! I've a splitting headache! To-morrow—another time!"

He hesitated, looking rather ugly. But she did look ill. He decided it would be cruel to press his advantage now. At any rate, he had achieved his purpose. She was in his power now. He had managed to make her do what she had said she would never do—place herself under a heavy obligation to him.

"All right," he said. "I guess you're right. You don't look well. Sorry you've got a headache. Get a good night's sleep. And say—why don't you drop around to see me to-morrow afternoon? You know where I live, don't you?"

"Yes," she said. "Perhaps I will."

She nodded. And then she went out with Stella, and they turned to one another with a laugh. It was not long before they had cashed Holbrook's check. Stanley, with his reward for the apartment he had taken, went to the apartment he had taken, and was entirely satisfied, and Mona, with the rest of the money, hurried to Mary, who was delighted.

"And look!" said Mona. "I've got my idea now, Mary! Look at this letter he got from his father!"

"Does he mean to get married?" asked Mary after she had read the letter together and read it.

"Of course not! It was just a trick to get more money!" said Mona. "But—"

"Let me think," said Mary. "You're right, Mona. We must be sure to get some way we can turn this to account!"

"I knew you'd be able to think of something, Mary! That was why I got the piece of the letter!"

It was an easier young man, determined to forget his jolt in the matter of the I. O. U., and to make up for that by the conquest of Mona, who had taken the apartment he had taken. He let himself in, and called, as good as he was inside the door: "Betty!"

An old suitcase was there on the floor, and there were evidences that some one had been in the room. Eagerly he tore aside the curtains that hid the other room. It was empty! Save for a note.

"Where you boast about any girl," he read, "be sure you know the girl!"

He went back to his own apartment in a black rage. And there, to increase his anger, he found Stella waiting for him. The girl he had had cast off! He felt a moment's tenderness at the sight of her—she had trusted him so fully, she was so different from this other girl.

"What do you mean by this?" he snarled. "Oh, Charley!" she said, pleadingly. "My dear—aren't you going to be fair to me now?"

"Fair to you?" he mocked. "You've got no claim on me!"

"There is a reason," she faltered. "Charley—can't you understand?"

"He had enough decency in him to be affected by her revelation—and to realize that she was in his power. Even while he stared at her, however, there was a knock at the door. He answered it and received a note from his father.

"My dear son: Come in on business to-night, and am at this hotel. Am going to bed, so do not call to-night."

"Call to-morrow, and bring your bride to me."

"Have decided to increase your inheritance if you marry at once."

Holbrook stared at the letter in dismay. And then he looked up and saw Stella, trembling, fearful. Suddenly he saw a way out.

"Stella!" he said. "I've behaved like a beast to you, my dear! I can see it now! Would you marry me to-night?"

She could not speak; she could only throw herself in his arms.

He rushed out. And in a little while Stella took her telephone and called for Mona and Mary. It was Mona who answered.

"Oh—yes—yes—he's going to marry me!" said Stella. "But I'm so afraid of what he'll say when he finds out!"

"He'll say nothing," said Mona. "Because I've written to him to explain it all—and to let him know that he's done the only thing that would reconcile him with his father. You wait, Stella—I believe he'll settle down now, and turn into a pretty decent sort of husband in spite of everything! And I know you're going to be a good! Then she hung up."

"He may not stay reformed," said Mary to Mona. "I think he's a bad egg. But it was worth doing anything for. We collected some of our bills, and we've made that little girl happy! That was worth doing, Mona!"

(To Be Continued.)

"I think I want to meet Mr. Charley Holbrook—on his own ground!" said Mona, viciously. . . . "I think we'll enjoy collecting a little bill from Mr. Holbrook."

"Oh!" said Mary. "I begin to see now, too! Not how we can do anything for Stella—but how we can punish Mr. Holbrook, anyhow!"

Charlie. You've been awfully good to me. I'm sorry I lost so much money for you!"

"Oh, don't you care!" he said. "Plenty more where that came from! My father isn't exactly in danger of going to the poorhouse, you know!"

"It's a good thing—the way you spend it!" she said, with a flash of spirit.

"You've never let me spend much on you," he told her. "When you change your mind I'll show you something that will make you sit up and take notice!"

"Don't make rash promises," she advised. "You don't know how far I may go when I once start!"

"I'll take a chance on that!" he laughed. "I know the real thing when I see it, little one! Oh, we'll break a few of the speed laws when we once get a start!"

"I'll see about that!" thought Mona, when he was in a humor. And, as usual, she went back to Mary. Her headache was gone, as if by magic.

The next afternoon Mona did, as Holbrook had suggested, call at his bachelor apartment. But she was not alone. The "proprietor" of the gambling house, whom she addressed as Mr. Stanley, was with her.

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